

Re-imagining **CARITAS**
THE WEBINAR REPORT
CARITAS DIOCESE of SALFORD

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Reimagining **CARITAS** - Love in Action - in a post coronavirus society

Free Webinar

Panel includes: Bishop John Arnold,
Sir Peter Fahy and Mark Wiggin.

Wednesday 29th April, 2PM-3.20PM

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ABSTRACT

Responding to the challenge of this current Coronavirus pandemic and daring to peer through the current fog of uncertainty to imagine a "new normal" after the crisis subsides, Caritas Diocese of Salford invited people to be part of a facilitated panel discussion on key themes relating to Catholic social action and to begin the process to re-imagine the future of Caritas services.

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Re-imagining CARITAS - Love in Action - in a Post-Coronavirus Society

“I don’t want to return to the old normal where we turn a blind eye to poverty, where people sleep on streets who are homeless or where people without a living wage return to foodbanks. Where people are deprived of their liberty living in refugee camps and deprived of welfare, health care and education or where over a billion people live without clean water. I want a new normal where we respect people, their dignity, where we relieve poverty and there is no forced migration or modern day slavery. That’s the new normal we must aim for!”

Bishop John Arnold, Easter Sunday 2020

“This is not a time for self-centredness, because the challenge we are facing is shared by all, without distinguishing between persons.”

Pope Francis, Easter Sunday, 2020

Welcome to the Webinar

Covid-19 has presented a significant challenge to the Church and all aspects of society. A pandemic of this scale will have unprecedented and unforeseen consequences for us as individuals, families, employers and as citizens.

The coronavirus has also highlighted the significant inequalities and vulnerabilities within our society. Businesses, the public sector and charitable organisations will all need to reflect upon their purpose in light of such monumental changes. One thing is clear: we will not emerge the same as we were before the pandemic, and the social agencies of the Church will also need to evolve to respond to potentially growing needs.

Responding to the challenge of this current crisis and daring to peer through the current fog of uncertainty to imagine a “new normal” after the crisis subsides, Caritas Diocese of Salford invites people to be part of a facilitated panel discussion on key themes relating to Catholic social action and to begin the process to help us as we re-imagine the future of Caritas services.

We hope that this report based on the webinar will form part on an ongoing dialogue with all our stakeholders.

Mark Wiggin
Director
Caritas Diocese of Salford

Introduction

150 join the webinar 'Re-imagining CARITAS – Love in Action in a Post-Coronavirus Society'

On Wednesday, 29th April 2020, John Quinton-Barber, founder and Managing Director of Social Place, chaired an online webinar, 'Re-imagining CARITAS – Love in Action in a Post-Coronavirus Society', on behalf of Caritas Diocese of Salford.

The webinar was an opportunity for participants to explore how Catholic charities like Caritas Salford should continue the social mission of the Church in a “new normal” once the Coronavirus pandemic lockdown has ended. The registration online was 185 people, and 150 people listen in and asked questions of a knowledgeable panel.

Meet the Panel



Rt Rev. John Arnold is Bishop of Salford and a member of the Bishops' Conference Department for International Affairs, Chair of CAFOD's Board of Trustees, Chair of Trustees of Caritas Diocese of Salford, and a trustee of Caritas Social Action Network. Pope Francis appointed Bishop John as the Bishop of Salford in September 2014. His installation at Salford Cathedral took place on 8th December 2014, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.



Sr Judith Russi is a sister of Saint Mary of Namur and the director of Catholic educational charity EducareM. She is an inspirational speaker on Catholic education and has published a number of books including *How to Survive as a Governor in a*

Catholic School. She offers a passionate witness to Catholic education and the critical importance of advocacy and formation with young people.



Sir Peter Fahy is a retired senior British police officer. He was the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police (GMP), the United Kingdom's third largest police force. He retired from the police force on 23rd October 2015 after serving for 34 years. He is an active trustee of several charities including the Diocese of Salford, Fr Hudson Care and Caritas Diocese of Salford. He has a special interest in refugee resettlement through Community Sponsorship and Modern Day Slavery.



Dr Philip McCarthy is the Chief Executive Officer of Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) and took up his role as CEO at the start of December 2015. A former GP and author he has built the network up to 48 member organisations many of them Caritas diocesan organisations. CSAN was established by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to develop the Church's social action and shares in the mission of the Catholic Church, working closely with CAFOD and Caritas Europe.



Mike Kane MP is a Labour Party politician who was elected as Member of Parliament for Wythenshawe and Sale East in 2014. Mike is a Director of Catholics for Labour and a champion for the application of Catholic social teaching.



Mark Wiggin is the Director of Caritas Diocese of Salford and has held this position since 2010. Caritas supports over twenty projects ranging from fostering to refugee resettlement as well as promoting the social action work of the wider Catholic family.

Summary of the Panellists' Perspectives

Bishop John Arnold called for a “new normal” as we all need to respond to the big social issues of our time: homelessness, modern slavery and the environment - care of our common home. He emphasised the central importance of prayer, reminding participants of Pope Francis’s call to be outward-looking, even during this lockdown and to see everyone as our brothers and sisters – not solely caring for our own families and not expecting the government to fix society’s issues. For each of us, this requires a “generosity of thought.” While we are all still unable to attend public worship, Bishop John reminded us that we can be in solidarity with those who live in remote places of the world and have no church buildings. He added that while attending Mass and the Sacraments is integral to our Faith, the Church is not confined to buildings and he reminding us that “wherever we are, we are Church.”

Sr Judith Russi emphasised the need to make room for young people to be active and heard in decision-making in our parishes. She echoed the thoughts of many when she talked about how for some young people the Coronavirus pandemic was enabling for some families a precious family-time together. Sr Judith emphasised the importance of harnessing the energy of young people as Gospel activists and adapting structures to ensure that their voice and enthusiasm can be heard. Quoting Pope Francis’s message, she said, “the role of young people was to make noise in the Church.”

Sir Peter Fahy is in favour of subsidiarity – local communities taking action themselves. Reflecting on the grassroots example of the early Christians, he encouraged the audience to consider the need for an “asset-based community development” approach. He shared how he has witnessed communities galvanised since this lockdown as an example of how local people are best placed to know what their community needs. Oftentimes, Sir Peter explained, public services see volunteers as people to be ‘suffered’ rather than as co-collaborators and as people who are best placed to know their communities and can contribute to resolving a community’s problems often better than the State can.

Philip McCarthy, Director of the national Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN), explained the CSAN role as to “encourage every Catholic and parish to see the works of justice and mercy as equal in importance to the liturgy and sacraments.” Commenting on the role of CSAN in in the current pandemic, he emphasised that CSAN’s work is to “animate and co-ordinate” the Church’s charitable works in England and Wales. For example, to assist parishes to reach out during this current pandemic, CSAN has collaborate with the Society of St Vincent de Paul to publish a helpful toolkit for members and parishes that is available online.

Mike Kane MP believes that Caritas has an important role in organising and mobilising the domestic Church. He shared his thoughts on the resilience of people and communities during this pandemic. An important part of this resilience will be how our faith will compel us to “build back better” for everyone in our society once the coronavirus is over. Sharing the experience in his own parish, Mike explained how his parish priest had relayed to him that around 50% of parishioners do not have access to the internet, making them unable to participate in online Masses, and how internet poverty reinforces social isolation and lack of access to public services.

Mark Wiggin, speaking on the Caritas role in the Diocese of Salford, said, “As a Catholic charity, we believe in changing people’s lives; we are concerned about poverty and vulnerability, and we want to redress the imbalance between rich and poor. We want to look at the common good and protect the world, which is our common home. All these things bring us together in one way or another.”

The First Question

John Quinton-Barber; the host for the webinar and CEO of Social, the Manchester-based media company; introduced the webinar and Mark Wiggin, Director of Caritas Diocese of Salford.

Why this webinar now?

Mark Wiggin

It’s important to have this webinar at this time so that those of us who are part of the Church, whether in a leadership or service role, have the opportunity to take stock, reflect on the situation we now find ourselves in and have a conversation. I was keen to bring together a panel of people who each have different leadership roles within the Church. I wanted to bring people together to share ideas with our community and see what learning we could get from this unprecedented situation.

As a Catholic charity in the Diocese of Salford, I see this webinar as an opportunity to look at the service we are giving now as part of the Church but also to start planning for the service we will need to give with the Church going forward.

The Questions continued...

What lessons can be learned and what are the links between the Coronavirus and Care of Our Common Home?

Sr Judith Russi

It's about appreciating nature much more and hearing people talking much more and noticing the beauty of God's creation. We must be different – it can't be as it was. I pray we don't go back to where we were before. That is not where we need to be. We should not revert to past behaviours but learn to put others before our own needs. Many people in our streets and parishes have been affected or died – this is a real wake up call. Do we need to travel so much? Do we need to fly so much? I love watching dads giving time to their families and it's wonderful to watch people looking up to the sky at the constellations and stars!

What is the role of the Church in making sure we don't go back?

Sr Judith Russi

To be gospel activists on the street, to be leaders in society at every level for the transformation of the person and society. Structures must change and change quickly. The structure must change so that young people and young adults, who find it difficult to find a place at the table, can be part of the decision-making process. The Church has a lot to learn about utilising the talents of young people. We have to change!

Sir Peter Fahy

Currently, I am active volunteering in my local Covid-19 support group, collecting and delivering materials. We have a lot of vulnerable families and this is why the virus has created so much havoc. However, hopeful we have come together to help those in need. It strikes me that there is a huge gap between an enormous need and a huge number of people who want to do good. Seven hundred and fifty thousand people have signed up to the NHS responder's app yet big charities are struggling to respond. There is a danger that charities have over-professionalised. I am struck more and more by the idea that public service professionals almost suffer volunteers rather than see them as part of the solution. They need to recognise that local people who have been through difficult times are often the best people to help other people going through a difficult time. The aim must be to try to solve problems together not just react to them. In the Acts of the Apostles, the Apostles did not run off and set up a charity but were alive in their community. Often its existing faith groups that are really good at fulfilling the local needs. We should be energising parishes.

I am also interested in the debate about care homes and the real difficulties they are facing – it does lead me to question the way that we care for older people. In other parts of the world, older people are cared for in the community. Pope Francis is really challenging us about 'service' and we need to think more about asset-based community development by local people.

Mike Kane MP

Most politicians are pining for the good old days of Brexit! The difference about the current circumstances is that everybody is in this together: rich, poor; black or white.

In my constituency it's been identified through my parish priest that 50% of people in the parish do not have access to the internet and so cannot access Mass online.

The theologian Carl Rahner said, "power is a gift from God." The Catholic Church is still the most powerful civil institution in the world. The Church has to be an instrument for "building back better." What if the Church can build that network – to work together when things are going to be difficult? Having faith gives resilience in these challenging times. The duty of Catholics is "to light a candle in that gloom." The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes is a good example of how we need to organise by getting people to first sit down together. This is the first challenge and we will "build back better" if we do it in groups and as community and that is why Catholic charities and Caritas are so important.

Bishop John Arnold

There are great opportunities and a great response from people in our parishes who are networking to create the opportunities to serve their communities, whilst at the same time addressing the issues of how we look after ourselves. The tendency has been to look inwards, yet the great call within our faith has been to look outwards, encouraged by Pope Francis. Globally and at home we are faced with famine and food poverty, modern slavery, homelessness and destitution, and the plight of refugees. There has also been a disintegration of aspects in our own society with the tendency to wait for government to do something. The report about children in the UK being the unhappiest in Europe must surely tell us something? We must be more generous in what are we going to do about social problems. If the pandemic allows us the time to think about the common objectives that we have: our common home; that people are our brothers and sisters and that people have a common dignity, then going back to 'normal' would be to neglect demands that we are beginning to see so much more clearly. We need to find a "new normal" that includes more of a sense of common wellbeing that we owe to all our brothers and sisters.

Is there anything being planned by the Bishops about the "new normal"?

Bishop John Arnold

We have been made aware by countless radio and media interviews about the immense suffering of people. There is here a great spiritual angle! People have been critical about closing churches but this was for a good reason to protect people from contaminating others, protecting health and wellbeing. Wherever we are, we are Church! How wonderful it is that we can meet in public buildings and share the sacraments and liturgy. But the fact that we cannot do that at this moment puts us in solidarity with many people around the world who have no churches. We are denied that sense of gathering in public but that puts us in solidarity with so many others of our faith denied that same opportunity. More importantly, we need to develop the idea that we are 'Church' wherever we are such as at work or at home. Being Catholic is more than just being in buildings – St Paul calls us 'Ambassadors for Christ' – Pope Francis calls us to be missionary disciples and to do things in a Christ-like manner.

Should Caritas get involved in funding from government, local or national?

Mark Wiggin

80% of the original funding of Caritas came ten years ago from government and local authorities because we delivered services for the state. Today, our income is mostly from voluntary sources, grants and trusts. Should we take government money? Yes, but only where that doesn't take us from our mission. We want to be part of the wider community and civil society and where it fits our mission to deliver on behalf of the state, we will but our primary mission is to the social mission of the Church. An important role of Caritas is to support those needs which government doesn't always attend to.

How does Labour plan to learn lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic?

Mike Kane MP

Covid-19 has almost overnight tackled homelessness through the government and local authorities using hotels and other accommodation to protect vulnerable people and take homeless people off the streets. This has also reduced criminal begging on the streets and this helps police to better tackle major drug dealing. This has shone a light on what government can do when it wants and needs to. We do now need to tackle Universal Credit and especially address the problem of the child benefit cap.

What influence can you have on behalf of the Catholic voice and in what new way?

Mike Kane MP

As a director of a loose-knit coalition of Labour supporters I am very interested in the number of Catholics who may not be practising in church but may be practising social acts of mercy. The Church has an evangelic opportunity to marry up the volunteers with churches and give them an opportunity to have an outlet for faith. We need to rely on the skills of our parishioners and what they can bring to bear on this crisis going forward.

Is there still a role for the volunteer in delivering the kind of services that Caritas does?

Peter Fahy

It is more than just being a volunteer, but rather we all have that responsibility. We can't just parcel off old people to be looked after by other organisations. We know that relationships and early family life are at the heart of issues like homelessness, etc. Much more than volunteering and politics Caritas needs to embrace not just having the money to deal with these issues, but actually mobilising the effort and good will of people that this crisis has developed. At the heart of every Caritas project should be specialist services that we need to provide and some particular expertise that needs to be developed but the ultimate test should be how many people is this bringing in to play their part and to live their faith and how is this project trying to solve the underlying issue? There are some projects meeting a need but sometimes it is almost as though a project sustains this need rather than trying to address it.

Should Caritas, like CAFOD, be more unified with each other and have a more defined role within the Catholic Church?

Philip McCarthy

The role of Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) is to ‘animate and co-ordinate’ the Church’s charitable works at home in England and Wales. Fundamentally, that means that every Catholic and every parish sees the works of justice and mercy as an important part of their individual vocation and part of the mission of their parish, as equal in importance to the liturgy and sacraments.

Secondly, we try to co-ordinate the many Catholic charities – 48 within a growing network – but it’s not so much about unity in terms of structures, it is more about collaboration and communion with one another. A role of CSAN is through co-ordination. Recently, we reached out with the SVP to roll out a toolkit to support parishes. Finally, Pope Francis has set up Covid-19 panel to work on the Church’s global response and an important CSAN activity will always be to deepen communion and collaboration with our members and our sister organisation CAFOD.

How can we capture the best of humanity? How can we evangelise through Caritas?

Philip McCarthy

I think the way younger people have responded to the crisis has been immensely moving and this has been extraordinary and encouraging. It’s absolutely right that for many young people, the sight of Church engaging in social action is most important to them. I remember myself, going out on ‘soup run’ was vastly important for me as I saw the Church’s love –in-action and it was transformative. This was for me an opportunity and a moment of grace.

Today’s panel is made up mainly of men. What does the panel think about that?

Sr Judith Russi

A huge number of women are involved in working within Caritas – the majority of those involved are women. Maybe the question is more about those in influential positions. This is a huge issue for the Church and all organisations. Women have particular gifts but do women get the opportunity to be heard when they really need to be heard and is it done in the right way?

Mark Wiggin

This does need to be addressed from the top down and we need to increase the presence of women and other groups who are either directly or indirectly discriminated. It is an important question and we need to keep working at it and we shouldn’t take our foot off the pedal!

Mike Kane MP

Just at this moment I am having more time with my wife at the weekends. I finally got the chance to watch *Entertaining Angels*, the story of Dorothy Day. The greatest social advocate in the 20th century was a woman.

How can we educate parents to look outwards to support this new world?

Sr Judith Russi

Caritas has developed a whole new programme for its young Caritas Ambassadors called Caritas in Action. It's a resource to help schools look at waste, turn off laptops and lights when they are not in use, and look at the cost of this for the school and our planet. Caritas Salford is leading the way, really challenging governors, leadership teams and teachers in schools to look at new ways of doing things. Children are being invited to change behaviours and measure the impact. Salford Diocese is leading the way!

Since many overstretched parish priests are at a vulnerable age, is it timely for laity to be administering the parishes?

Bishop John Arnold

We are moving in the direction of asking what priests were ordained to be. Our parishes need to be administered by parishioners. In Salford we have had an abundance of priests but numbers are reducing. The essentials of priestly ministry are defined and how priests serve the community will be defined by the way that we distribute them and how we develop the pastoral ministry of the laity. This was happening for a long time during the penal period when priests were moving around the country and a priest came to the faithful to celebrate the sacraments. This is still the way the church is organised in many areas of the global South. We have a journey to 2030 and this journey will determine how we value priests and their time.

As an Anglican who has worked with Caritas and CSAN, what is the ecumenical approach post Covid-19?

Bishop John Arnold

We have good ecumenical and inter-faith relations, and this has been strengthened when we came together after the Arena bombing. This tragedy fostered good relationships between us all. We are talking to each other about how better to connect things up, emphasising what Pope Francis sees as the inter-connectedness of all things. Global issues, concern for health, refugees, the environment; if we can recognise these connections we can work well together. We are united in so many of the basic beliefs about the sanctity of life, the dignity of human life. These are things that we should develop as much as we can.

What does it mean when we say "Nobody Left Behind"?

Sir Peter Fahy

I have just picked up a big consignment of Personal Protective Equipment from Stafford Prison and prisoners there are donating their wages to the NHS. A lot of people that society had condemned are left behind and if we had that same start in life as they have, we may have ended up left behind and in exactly the same place they are today.

It's a really good question and comes back to the issue about leaving nobody behind. The language of mercy and justice that we are used to hearing has become the language of politicians. The Way of Cross I listened to on Good Friday was written by people from the Italian criminal justice system. A lot of the issues about the criminal justice system and the prison population comes back to the fact that many people have had a difficult start in life. Putting people in prison is not only incredibly damaging for the person, but it doesn't necessarily reduce crime and costs a lot of money. Therefore, hopefully this particular crisis will help us think a lot about the issues in society and in a different way.

Caritas is caring for people who are financially poor and homeless but does it have any services to professionally well-paid people who are under pressure to success more and more?

Mark Wiggin

There is a lot of pressure on people at the moment about job security, future employment and children's attainment at school. The question is a good reminder that we are there, and should be there, for everybody. As a charity with limited resources we do have an imperative to serve the poor and those in need, and put those resources to best effect where we can. But there are hidden poverties in society: anxieties, stress, mental health and other issues. Nobody is exempt from these whether you are wealthy or poor. We need to really look into the hearts of everybody when it comes to charity to create space for everybody. Covid-19, in a strange way, has brought us together as a community and has broken down these barriers of class, wealth, affluence, colour and race. Nobody Left Behind is not just the poor but it is everybody.

Mike Kane MP

The need is dire regarding unemployment and family debt. Are there ways such as credit unions to help free them from debt? I hold my constituency surgery on Fridays and get large numbers of enquiries about debt. Debt is the underlying cause of most of the social issues that I face in my surgery. Too many of our people are relying on payday loans, through apps or illegally on the streets. Can we alleviate people's debt on an individual basis? How do we allow people to flourish? People are physically constrained by debt day in and day out.

How well are international charities prepared to respond to Covid-19 in the global south?

Philip McCarthy

I know that colleagues in CAFOD are working very hard on this to help people in the developing world. Though it's not my area of expertise, Caritas works closely with CAFOD in day-to-day matters but there is a clear distinction in our different roles. There is a question about the future as to whether that sharp distinction which exists in England and Wales should continue.

Pope Francis has invited every parish to offer a home to a refugee family. Caritas Salford, Portsmouth, Westminster and other CSAN members are leading on the

Community Sponsorship of refugees. How can you to build on this radical practical action and spread it across the UK?

Philip McCarthy

This is something that we have been working on for a long time, over the past three years, following Pope Francis's call. We have recently employed Sean Ryan who worked for Caritas Salford and who is now going around the country to inspire communities to encourage Catholic parishes.

Sir Peter Fahy

The Community Sponsorship model could be used for so many types of issues including those who leave the penal or mental health systems. It's a great model for how you can build on relationships with those who want to do good. Crucially, the benefits are that people with local knowledge of their own area can provide twenty-four-hour wrap-around support, which traditionally the public services have struggled to do.

As well as the principles and philosophies of the change that we will all face, what does the panel think are the most important practical imperatives for any transformation of Caritas Salford?

Sr Judith Russi

We are in a time – I don't like the expression 'lockdown' – a time of reflection. Although we are experiencing more isolation, we have had time to think. There has been a lot of thinking and of talking but now is a time to act! We have seen the need and people are ready and willing. We need to empower and enable the people who are ready and able and willing – that phenomenal number of volunteers, the great tsunami of goodness being release into society! But the structures need to be there for it.

We need in Salford to find ways of challenging parishes to welcome young people and young adults to what they are ready to do: to step up and do what they have already shown us they can do. They can network far faster than any of us. We need to really look at schools being a vehicle for change but schools come across barriers and blocks. They want to do more to engage people in social action, love in action, but it becomes very difficult for them because of so many barriers. We need not to wait two or three years – we need to act now! How can our young people respond to what Pope Francis says – "I want you to make a noise, I want you to be a nuisance and cause chaos in the parishes"? Are we going to listen to that or are we going to say we just want you to come to Mass and don't rock the boat. Let them rock the boat to show what they can do. In any time of crisis in our history who have we really called upon? It is the young elements as well as old but those young people are ready to give everything. Didn't we see that in the last terrible war? Who were the ones going behind enemy lines, alone and unknown? Who were the ones that were running very dangerous messages from one post to another? It was the young! And they did it with no recognition and they knew nobody would know, no medals or titles, they just were ready to serve. Pope Francis is calling us to allow them to do it so let's do it. Let's not allow our reflections to be just talking shop! Our plans need to be about now.

Now is the time to harness good will and generosity and recognise sacrifices that many are making. I hope that we don't move out of this time, which we will soon, and just plod on.

Sir Peter Fahy

Caritas should be concentrating on how to mobilise local efforts, especially parishes and schools and the wider community – everyone that wants to do good. It's also crucial that we are meeting with other faith groups, with Muslims and Sikhs who are doing great work locally. We need to do great work locally but at the same time think what we're also missing. As Mike said, we're part of this huge Catholic family and a lot of the issues we are going to be dealing with are going to be global issues and I think that the Church and Caritas could be a lot more effective at how we link to all the other Catholics around the world who are part of our family.

Mike Kane MP

We're not here doing a job performance but Caritas are going to have to respond to change in four ways. Finding new members, developing new training that will be required in the light of the new circumstances, getting new leaders – yes, women, young, leaders of colour – and finally finding new sources of money, which will be an impossible task but has to be done. I would like to say that I contribute to the mission in Shrewsbury Diocese and we had a refugee problem in my constituency and Mark was an angel who came along and before we knew it we had set up the Well Project to support refugees who had no recourse to public funds. And that project is still going today. I think responding to change is going to be as vital as the 'new normal' that we're going to face.

Philip McCarthy

St Catherine of Siena, a lay woman who became a Doctor of the Church, was always willing to upset the status quo. She said "Nothing great is ever achieved without much enduring." At this moment we're enduring very much but there are great opportunities and I'm sure that in Caritas Salford, with their collaborators they will achieve many great things.

Bishop John Arnold

I value the work of Caritas so much but I do believe that we must never lose the connection between our social action and our spirituality and prayer. We have our little diocesan prayer, which is so relevant – 'Stay with us Lord on our Journey.' I do believe that we will achieve so much more if we remember that the Lord is with us and that we're doing his work. That brings it to fruition in a way that goes beyond our ability to measure.

Mark Wiggin

One of the things I've been trying to do and continue to do is to free up people and help communities, especially faith communities to get involved in the charitable works of the Church. That's not just about Caritas, it's about all the other Catholic charities

and organisations. Helping to free people up is important but we've got to do it safely and responsibly. That means taking safeguarding very seriously.

One of the things that the pandemic has demonstrated to me is the importance of creating hubs in communities – places where people can feel safe and where people can go to. I would like to see our parishes becoming hubs in the community. Somehow, schools and parishes need to link up first and then we need to link up to the wider community and civil society. Mobilisation is important.

One of the things that I've learnt throughout my working and professional life is that there is not the urgency that we need to change things. Urgency is so important because we can fall back into the familiar comfortable old ways very easily.

This webinar has also been a fantastic opportunity to consult people and listen to what they feel as important. I can sum it up by saying the real issue is to make sure that we can somehow mobilise and become part of the wider community and bring our faith into that as well.

Bishop John Arnold

I just want to say a huge thanks for this webinar - excellent and thought provoking. "Stay with us Lord on our Journey."

Questions

With 150 people engaged in the webinar it was not possible to file all the questions raised. The questions recorded below give a good insight into what is on people's minds at this moment in our history. We will reflect on them, and bring them into our analysis and planning going forward. Thank you.

We also received a number of really positive comments from participants and especially from those of you who were able to send feedback through our online survey after the presentation. This is also really helpful to us and we will use the survey information to inform our planning and decision making. We hope to develop this further in the future.

Here are the full range of questions:

1. In this time of responding to change and re-imagining the future there is a national shortage of foster carers and 78,000 young people in care nationally. In this time of working together what can the Catholic community and parishes do to contribute to responding to this great need?
2. I think we recognise we must find a "new normal" and a genuinely successful, caring society. What is the single most important thing each of us can do to influence those around us? How do we convince others that a simpler, more inclusive society is the way forward?

3. How do you see Caritas supporting women in the church and community, and coming together for the common good within a woman in the Church's theological remit?
4. Please can you ask how well international charities are prepared for responding to the spread of Covid-19 through the global south? I'm referencing the International Rescue Committee with David Miliband warning of a billion infections and 3 million deaths yesterday on Sky TV.
5. In a church with a lot of emphasis on pious practices and devotions is there one bit of advice that can encourage the Church to be more socially active, I'm personally finding it a big challenge.
6. Some Dioceses have supported Church-led social action and others have ruled it out. Are there lessons here for the Bishops Conference for the future? What does this say about the place of social action in the Church and the way senior leaders examine their approaches to risk and to mission?
7. At the moment 'be kind' is one of the popular mottos of the pandemic. How powerful that message would be with just a simple crucifix. The Catholic Church desperately needs a rebrand. Our image is conservative, aged and somewhat out of touch.
8. We need to ensure the safety for both helped & helpers in the pandemic. But responses to need for social action from dioceses in England and Wales has differed quite considerably. Why?
9. The situation in China is reportedly reverting quickly to a pre-Coronavirus situation, as for example, pollution levels are rising exponentially. How do we influence government that our rediscovered community and social values should remain and we do not just revert to type?
10. Can we think about ways that church property (churches, land, schools, accommodation) can be more widely used to serve the community?
11. Isn't it time for the Diocese of Salford to take the opportunity of COVID-19 and publicise Pope Francis's wisdom and his social thoughts and advice through inter-faith activities?
12. CST principle of Subsidiarity has to be seen as the vital way to empower parishes & lay-led organisations. Resources need to be shared. What grants are Caritas offering to lay organisations especially for faith-based work often excluded by other funds?
13. The need is dire regarding unemployment, debt and the pressures on families. Are there opportunities for us to help those most in need and who live outside

the areas where we currently have strongholds? Are there ways to help families to access Credit Unions and help free them from debt?

14. Pope Francis has invited every RC Parish to offer a home to a refugee family. Caritas Salford, Portsmouth and Westminster plus CSAN are leading on Sponsoring Refugees. How do we build on this radical practical action and spread it across the UK?
15. As an Anglican who has worked extensively with Caritas and CSAN, especially with refugees and displaced people, I wonder what thoughts people have about post COVID-19 ecumenical projects, especially around the displaced and Laudato Si?
16. Should Caritas place a greater emphasis on the work of Together for The Common Good?
17. The Government has introduced ""temporary"" legislation to allow doctors to prescribe the two-abortion-pills to be self-administered by women at home. How can we ensure that after the Corona crisis, things can return to safeguard lives? Or is there a danger of this becoming the 'new normal?'
18. I appreciated the discussion of equality for women. Might we have the same discussion for people of colour?
19. How will we, in the 'new normal', be seen to be putting the 'people and planet' first? The current pandemic situation shows how inextricably connected they both are – there's urgency not to just talk about it?
20. People often want to volunteer but sometimes need direction and options. Do you see any feasibility in utilising tech - similar to the 'Good Sam' app that has been used by the NHS to mobilise people in parishes to volunteer for Caritas and other Catholic charities on an ad-hoc basis?
21. Since many of our overstretched parish priests are in the vulnerable age category of this virus, is it timely for the laity to progress their 'forward in faith' role by running the parishes, with priests just administering the sacraments but doing little else?
22. How would the panel suggest we engage our young people – currently not in school – and involve them in social action?
23. Do Caritas now need to develop further partnership working with other faith-based organisations, other charities, funders and others to continue to deliver much needed services for vulnerable people and families?

24. As a SEN teacher all that the government deemed important was suddenly cancelled (exams, standard tests etc.) How can we make this experience a real time for change? How can we support our Children and Young People when they return to schools?
25. How do we use the growth in community action and engagement (outside the church) into the wider vision and mission of the Church? CSAN is vital in this area but are they resourced enough as an important arm of the church in this task going forward?
26. I believe abortion in the UK is the biggest crisis we face. What will Caritas do to remove this culture of death?
27. Pope Francis spoke during his Morning mass this week of the need for a universal basic salary. In the light of Catholic social teaching do you feel this would be worth supporting?
28. In a post-virus environment, is there greater need and impetus for Caritas to link more closely and effectively with the Diocese's schools, parishes and communities to sustain our services?
29. I have the impression that Caritas tends to care more about (financially) poor and homeless people. What is Caritas's approach to professional and well-paid people; many of whom are under pressure to achieve/succeed more and more?"
30. The language of Mercy and Justice that we are used to hearing as Christians has become the unself-conscious everyday language of politicians and the media. Has this tiny virus succeeded where the Church has failed?
31. The panel is made up of 5 white men and only 1 religious sister, does this represent a wider lack of diversity in the leadership of Caritas? How can Caritas ensure a broader voice is heard from amongst their communities to build back better?
32. Schools make great moves in encouraging children on the important issues of the day. This is especially seen in the response to Laudato Si. However, many parents look inwards. How can we educate parents to support our schools' work and look outwards to support our new world?
33. COVID-19 showed that our wellbeing depends on the wellbeing of the most vulnerable people. This has been highlighted as the preferential option for the poor and vulnerable in Catholic Teachings. How does Labour plan to learn from the COVID-19 lessons and advocate for a post-COVID welfare change?

34. A mother on County Lines: “If Local Authority social workers can’t do their job and the Police can’t do their job, how can I do my job as a Mum?”
35. What can Caritas and Salford Diocese do in our diocesan schools to help Greater Manchester Police Challenge, Prepare, Prevent, and Protect?"
36. Why has the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales given such cautious advice about how local churches can respond?
37. Is there still a role for the volunteer in delivering the kind of service that Caritas develops?
38. Should Caritas get involved in bids for funding from government, local and national?
39. Together for the Common Good believe the pandemic represents a 'Kairos' moment of opportunity to reset society and rebuild communities. What can Caritas do to promote and support an upscaling of the work of Together For the Common Group to equip Catholic leaders to go out and light the spark within their own communities?
40. Has coronavirus led us to identify vulnerable people differently and if so what are the implications for Caritas services?
41. Does Caritas have a preventative role post-coronavirus? Can Caritas extend the volunteering approach within the community?